
HOW-TO-PREPARE GUIDE
FOR THE
TRANSPORTATION OFFICE MANAGER (10195)
WRITTEN EXAMINATION



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Transportation Office Manager Written Examination

How to Prepare Manual

As a candidate for the Transportation Office Manager (TOM) position within the Alabama State Merit System, you have indicated your interest in participating in the TOM selection procedure. As a candidate for TOM you will be required to participate in a written examination. This guide is provided to acquaint you with the TOM job and to help you prepare for the exam. Read this information very carefully. This guide contains information which you should find very helpful as you prepare for the exam.

The Transportation Office Manager Job

One Transportation Office Manager (TOM) position is available in each of the nine ALDOT divisions and a limited number of the large bureaus. Employees in this class serve as assistants to division engineers and bureau chiefs and are responsible for developing and establishing office procedures, including budget preparations and control, maintenance of fiscal records and accounts, preparation of personnel payrolls, handling personnel transactions, and coordinating office services with professional engineering work performed by other units of the division and bureaus. Work involves responsibility for making office operating decisions and for changing procedures to meet changing needs, but technical or professional policy or major procedural questions are referred to a professional supervisor for advice and decisions. Direct supervision is exercised over a group of subordinate office personnel engaged in a variety of routine clerical and other related duties.

A careful analysis of the job of Transportation Office Manager revealed the importance of a number of knowledges, skills and abilities (KSAs) necessary for successful job performance. This same job analysis revealed that these KSAs were also required on the first day of work as a TOM. In other words, these KSAs should be possessed by a TOM job candidate before they are hired and before any on-the-job training they may receive.

Job Knowledge

- Knowledge of fiscal policies and procedures and accounting general manuals to include payroll procedures, budgets, expense accounts, leave policies, comp time, account numbers, and/or program numbers as needed to obtain, receive, and/or provide information and/or guidance.
- Knowledge of ALDOT personnel directives to include attendance and punctuality, instructions on new hire procedures, disciplinary, grievance procedures, and job announcements as needed to answer questions, provide information, and/or counsel employees.
- Knowledge of math to include addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and percentages as needed to prepare budget, review payrolls, calculate percentages of construction times, complete and/or review equipment use report, adjust various accounts, prepare performance appraisals, and/or review or prepare material receipts.
- Knowledge of Personnel Procedures Manual, Rules of the State Personnel Board, Progressive Discipline Manual, Employee Performance Appraisal Manual to ensure policies and procedures regarding employees are being met.
- Knowledge of progressive discipline process to include counseling, warnings, suspensions, and termination's as needed to discipline subordinates, provide information to other supervisors, and/or make recommendations regarding other disciplinary matters.

Reading Comprehension Ability

- Ability to read and comprehend forms to include personnel forms such as Form 40, Form 11, relative form, comp time, leave forms, immigration, and/or drug forms as needed to ensure accuracy and correctness, comply with policy and procedures, and/or ensure all documentation is provided.
- Ability to read and comprehend correspondence such as letters and memorandum as needed to respond to requests, and/or inform others how to respond.
- Ability to read and comprehend forms to include materials receipts as needed to ensure vendor(s) are appropriately paid.
- Ability to read and comprehend forms to include accounting forms as needed to handle tax withholding, retirement, insurance, material receipts, transfer invoices, laboratory test charges, expense accounts, and/or budget as needed to ensure accuracy, compliance with policy and procedures, ensure proper distribution of funds, and/or furnish information on employees.

Problem Solving/Decision Making Ability

- Ability to identify problems, their cause and potential solutions to these problems.
- Ability to understand connections between issues and/or problems.
- Ability to present pros and cons of alternatives and recommend solutions.
- Ability to make decisions in a timely and prompt manner.
- Ability to make decisions about multiple problems simultaneously rather than one at a time.
- Ability to make the best possible decision when the information is incomplete.
- Ability to know when you have enough information to make a decision.
- Ability to take responsibility for making a decision and living with the consequences.
- Ability to assess a situation and make decisions with a limited amount of information as needed to reallocate personnel assignments, determine appropriate contacts when problems occur, and direct others in crises.

Planning and Organizing Ability

- Ability to set priorities to include employee work load, mail, meetings, deadlines of work due, and/or manage own (section) work load as needed to meet deadlines and accomplish goals.
- Ability to organize information such as budgetary information, project information, purchasing records, material receipts, staff workloads, inventory records, bulletin board information, and/or personnel or payroll data as needed to ensure work of section is maintained.
- Ability to manage multiple activities within a specified time frame as need to ensure goal/deadline achievement.
- Ability to delegate assignments to include payroll, procurement activities, filing, and/or typing as needed to distribute and process work load of section and/or accomplish assigned tasks in a timely manner.

Communication Ability

- Ability to communicate orally in one-on-one situations with individuals to include pronunciation and enunciation, and/or listening as needed to provide and/or receive information.
- Ability to communicate in writing to include proper grammar and sentence structure, and organizing facts in an understandable manner as needed to provide, review, or request information, and/or establish policies.
- Ability to interpret directions received from others as needed to determine appropriate actions to take.
- Ability to ask questions that will yield the relevant or needed information.
- Ability to gather information by contacting others and/or consulting manuals.

Interpersonal/Conflict Management Ability

- Ability to retain sensitive or confidential information as needed to ensure that classified or restrictive information is not provided to the wrong person.
- Ability to get along with others as needed to further the goals of the department.
- Ability to work under pressure to include meeting emergency deadlines, complying with court orders, and/or getting work load out when under-staffed as needed to complete tasks in a timely manner.
- Ability to quickly establish rapport/develop positive relationships with employees, supervisors, and/or vendors.
- Ability to mediate disputes or conflict situations as needed to help others get along and promote team harmony.

Budgeting Ability

- Ability to perform basic mathematics functions such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and calculation of percentages as needed to analyze budget requirements, compute overhead budgets, analyze personnel needs, and/or calculate expense amounts.

Because it is not possible to measure all of these KSAs with a written examination, not all will be measured by the exam. The KSAs that will be measured by the exam are listed in an upcoming section of this booklet.

When reviewing these KSAs and preparing for the test, the reader should note that the examples shown in each statement of how the KSA is used is not always intended to be completely inclusive. In other words, there may be questions on the exam which cover areas not directly mentioned as an example in the KSA.

Examination Description

In an attempt to provide an opportunity for each candidate to demonstrate his/her possession of the knowledges and abilities listed in the previous section, a multiple-choice, written examination was developed. The examination will consist of approximately 100 questions and you will be allowed three hours in which to complete the exam. Your answers will be marked on a Scantron sheet using a #2 pencil.

The exam is divided into five sections. Each section is comprised of questions which measure similar knowledges or abilities. Listed below are the names of each section and the knowledge or ability being measured in the section.

SECTION A. Job Knowledge

- Knowledge of fiscal policies and procedures and accounting general manuals to include payroll procedures, budgets, expense accounts, leave policies, comp time, account numbers, and/or program numbers as needed to obtain, receive, and/or provide information and/or guidance.
- Knowledge of ALDOT personnel directives to include attendance and punctuality, instructions on new hire procedures, disciplinary, grievance procedures, and job announcements as needed to answer questions, provide information, and/or counsel employees.
- Knowledge of math to include addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and percentages as needed to prepare budget, review payrolls, calculate percentages of construction times, complete and/or review equipment use report, adjust various accounts, prepare performance appraisals, and/or review or prepare material receipts.
- Knowledge of Personnel Procedures Manual, Rules of the State Personnel Board, Progressive Discipline Manual, Employee Performance Appraisal Manual to ensure policies and procedures regarding employees are being met.
- Knowledge of progressive discipline process to include counseling, warnings, suspensions, and termination's as needed to discipline subordinates, provide information to other supervisors, and/or make recommendations regarding other disciplinary matters.

SECTION B. Reading Comprehension

- Ability to read and comprehend forms to include personnel forms such as Form 40, Form 11, relative form, comp time, leave forms, immigration, and/or drug forms as needed to ensure accuracy and correctness, comply with policy and procedures, and/or ensure all documentation is provided.
- Ability to read and comprehend correspondence such as letters and memorandum as needed to respond to requests, and/or inform others how to respond.

SECTION C. Planning & Organizing

- Ability to set priorities to include employee work load, mail, meetings, deadlines of work due, and/or manage own (section) work load as needed to meet deadlines and accomplish goals.
- Ability to manage multiple activities within a specified time frame as need to ensure goal/deadline achievement.
- Ability to delegate assignments to include payroll, procurement activities, filing, and/or typing as needed to distribute and process work load of section and/or accomplish assigned tasks in a timely manner.

SECTION D. Written Communication

- Ability to communicate in writing to include proper grammar and sentence structure, and organizing facts in an understandable manner as needed to provide, review, or request information, and/or establish policies.
- Ability to interpret directions received from others as needed to determine appropriate actions to take.

SECTION E. Budgeting

- Ability to perform basic mathematics functions such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and calculation of percentages as needed to analyze budget requirements, compute overhead budgets, analyze personnel needs, and/or calculate expense amounts.

Preparing for the Selection Procedure

Candidates often ask how they should study for an exam like this one. It is important to focus on what will be measured and how it will be measured. You should carefully review the knowledges and abilities contained in this booklet.

In addition to this booklet there is another booklet entitled, "Transportation Office Manager Study Materials Handbook" that you should be aware of and use. You should carefully read and study **ALL** of the material in that booklet. The Study Materials Handbook contains a number of documents including Rules of the State Personnel Board, Personnel Procedures Manual, State of Alabama Performance Appraisal Manual, State of Alabama Progressive Discipline Manual, and the ALDOT Standard Policies, Procedures & Instructions Manual – Chapter 3 Payroll. The majority, but not all, of the answers to the questions in the exam can be found in this material. You will not be allowed to refer to the Study Materials Handbook during the exam, so you should be thoroughly familiar with its contents before you take the exam. A copy of this booklet is retained by the current TOM in each of the nine Divisions. A copy of this manual is also retained by the current TOM in the following Bureaus: Design, Maintenance, Equipment, and Transportation Planning and Modal Programs. Additionally, copies are available at ALDOT Personnel and State Personnel. Candidates will be allowed to review these study materials on-site but will **not** be allowed to make copies or take these materials off-site. Due to the size of this document it is not possible to mail copies to candidates. Unless otherwise indicated, exam questions will be drawn from the entire manual.

As you can see from the list, many abilities are measured by the selection procedure. An ability is *the power to perform an activity at the present time*. An ability is the capacity to do something. You can not really memorize something to obtain an ability. Accordingly, there is no study material provided in the Study Materials Handbook for most of the abilities. **There may also be some knowledges where all the material needed to answer a question are not provided. It is not too late to learn how to perform some of the abilities.** If you are not strong in an area, you should practice before participating in the selection procedure.

The three most important things you can do to help prepare for the TOM examination are to (1) review the knowledge and abilities, (2) read this manual to become familiar with the testing process so that you will be more relaxed and not confused during the administration, and (3) **thoroughly** review the Study Materials Handbook.

You will soon receive a test notification postcard stating the exact location for the administration of the examination as well as the day and time that you are scheduled to participate if you meet the minimum qualifications for this classification. You will receive your test notification postcard approximately one week prior to administration.

Tips for taking the examination

- Use your time wisely. You will have **three** hours to take the exam. You may want to bring a watch with you to keep up with your time. If you do not know the answer to a question, do not spend too much time thinking about it. Instead, move on to another question and return to the questions you have skipped if you have time.
- **Carefully** review the question before you attempt to answer it. The questions are not intended to be "tricky" but you will need to read the question **very carefully** to make sure you understand what it is asking. Also, if the question asks you to determine which one of the following statements is correct, many of the incorrect alternatives appear to be plausible so again read carefully. If any part of a statement is incorrect then the statement is incorrect.

- Darken the circles completely on the Scantron sheet so there is no doubt which answer you are giving. If you change your mind, make sure you erase completely.
- You will be allowed to mark or take notes in your test booklet; however the only information that will be scored is the answers you give on your Scantron sheet. You will be provided with one piece of scratch paper. This item will be collected at the end of the test. You will **not** be provided a calculator or #2 pencils. You should bring a basic function calculator and several sharpened #2 pencils with you to the examination site.
- **DON'T PANIC.** In a test like this one, some parts may seem more difficult to you than other parts. Don't give up. It is unlikely that anyone will obtain a perfect score. If it is hard for you to figure out an answer, it is probably hard for other people, too.

What to Expect On Exam Day

1. Allow plenty of time to get to the test site. Plan to get there at least 30 minutes before the test is scheduled to begin.
2. Bring a basic function calculator, several # 2 sharpened pencils, photo ID, and postcard from SPD notifying you of the date/time/location of the exam. **Small solar powered or battery operated calculators that perform basic functions such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, square roots, or percentages are allowed.** Calculators that plug-in, utilize tape, have word processing, spelling, thesauruses, or other storage and retrieval capabilities (except basic memory functions), are not allowed. **Calculators that are a feature on a cell phone are not permitted.** Calculators are subject to inspection by exam monitors. Applicants may not borrow or share calculators at the exam site. Test monitors will not provide calculators or batteries at the exam site.
3. Do not bring cell phones or pagers into the test room.
4. Come dressed comfortably. The total time provided for completion of this exam will be 3 hours.
5. Do **NOT** bring this booklet or any study materials to the test site. You will not be permitted to bring them in. **You will not be allowed to use any study or reference materials during the exam.**
6. You **must** bring the EXAM NOTIFICATION POSTCARD that you received from the State Personnel Department to the examination site.
7. To protect your own interests, you must bring a PICTURE IDENTIFICATION to the examination site. This can be a valid driver's license, a military identification card, a student identification card, or some other form of PICTURE IDENTIFICATION. You only need one form of PICTURE IDENTIFICATION.
8. You will **not** be allowed to enter the test site or participate in the selection procedure without your PICTURE IDENTIFICATION and TEST NOTIFICATION POSTCARD.
9. The monitor will provide you with instructions concerning restroom availability during the administration. It is important to remember that the time that you take to use the restroom is time away from working on the test. We recommend that you use the restroom before the test begins if possible.

10. Test monitors can answer questions concerning administration issues only. They will not be able to interpret the questions for you.
11. Candidates making any disturbance or caught cheating will be disqualified from the exam.
12. Do **NOT** bring this booklet into the test room.
13. **You will not be permitted to use any reference material during the exam.**

Administration Contact

The contact for the TOM examination is Cindy Jackson at (334) 242-3692.

Reasonable Accommodation

If you would like to request special testing accommodations or have any questions concerning the test site or testing conditions, please contact us at the phone number above.

Administrative Questions

You may contact us if you have any administrative questions or concerns about information presented in this booklet. It is not necessary for you to contact us in order to receive your grade; you should receive notification of your examination score by postcard after the scoring is completed. You can expect your scores back in 4 to 6 weeks.

Please remember that you will not need OR be allowed to bring anything other than the items previously mentioned to the test site.